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IN MEMORIAM.

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IN MEMORIAM

MARTHA SHERMAN TRACY.

MARTHA SHERMAN TRACY, widow of EBENEZER CARTER TRACY, born in New Haven, Connecticut, July 31, 1809, died in Plainfield, New Jersey, April 10, 1889.

Funeral services were held at the house of her son, J. Evarts Tracy, in Plainfield, Friday afternoon, April 12th, conducted by Rev. Dr. K. P. Ketcham and Rev. William R. Richards, and at the Old South Church in Windsor, Vermont, Sunday afternoon, April 14, 1889, conducted by the pastor of the church, Rev. S. S. Martyn, and a former pastor, Rev. Ezra H. Byington, of Worcester, Mass.

At the services in Windsor Mr. Byington delivered the memorial address.

The remains were buried in the old cemetery adjoining the church, beside the graves of her husband and three of her children.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

BY REV. EZRA H. BYINGTON.



LET us attend to-day to the gracious words spoken by our Lord to His disciples at various times, for their comfort and for the strengthening of their faith. He said at one time: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Luke xii, 6-7.) He said also: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "And the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." "And the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." (John x, 11, 3 and 4.) "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many abiding places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John xiv, 1-3.) "And I heard a voice from heaven saying: Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth:

yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them." (Rev. xiv, 13.)

It is such words as these which have given rise not only to the Christian view of life, but also to the Christian view of death. Our Lord has taught us to think of our life not as a sad and lonely journey through years of disappointment to the land of darkness and the shadow of death, but rather as a journey which God's love and care are directing; so that "all things work together for good to them that love God;"—a journey—unless we turn away perversely from God's plan—toward the haven of eternal rest. And so we call our places of Christian burial not charnel-houses, but cemeteries—sleeping places—chambers of rest for those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

We should bear in mind, also, that the dealings of God with the families of His children are very wonderful. He has made a covenant in which He has promised to be a God unto them, and to their seed after them. He "keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations." (Deut. vii, 9.) "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. iv, 8.)

There are a great many Christian families which have verified these promises of God in their history from generation to generation. God gives them the best things—not always the highest positions or the largest fortunes—for "a man's life con-

sisteth not in the abundance of things that he possesseth ;” but He gives them the things that are most important to develop their characters and to make their lives most fruitful. There is a sense in which the children of God’s people have an inheritance from the piety and usefulness of their ancestors.

They are very highly esteemed in love for the fathers’ sakes. The influences that have moulded their characters are the best possible. The objects of life which have been set before them are the purest and noblest. The friends of their fathers are their friends in all periods of their life. Happy is the man whose family name has been associated with the highest virtue and the noblest services. From such families our best and most reliable men are likely to come—men who have behind them generations of nature’s true noblemen.

These truths concerning the promises of God, and concerning the course of His providence, have been illustrated in the experience of our friend whose life has so recently ended.

Mrs. Martha Sherman Tracy was fortunate in the inheritance she had from a godly family. She was a daughter of the late Jeremiah Evarts, of Boston, a man of great natural abilities—a graduate from Yale College—who had been trained for the profession of Law. His tastes led him to turn aside from his profession, and devote himself to philanthropic and religious work. For many years he was the most

important executive officer of the American Board of Foreign Missions, a society which was the earliest of the missionary societies formed in this country, and which, at that time, received the contributions of Christians of all denominations. The effort to send the religion of Christ to the tribes and nations of the pagan world was the great idea of his vigorous and enterprising life. This gave him the broad views of a statesman in the Kingdom of Christ. This great enterprise gave tone and character to all his family life. The motives that were set before his children as the highest principles of action were not so much the prizes of this life as the honor of the Kingdom of Christ and the desire to do good to men. The idea of duty, after the Puritan sort, was much insisted upon. They grew up in a religious atmosphere.

The influence of her father was supplemented by that of her mother, who was a daughter of Hon. Roger Sherman, of New Haven, Conn. She inherited much of the genius and brilliancy of her distinguished father. She was also accustomed, at New Haven, to the best forms of social life, and her wide acquaintance with people of education and culture was of great value to her family. Her children took from her a certain sprightliness and versatility which combined admirably with the vigorous intellectual qualities of Mr. Evarts. The father died at the age of fifty, while the mother lived to an advanced age, so that her personal influence continued for a longer

time, and it had much to do in forming the characters of her children, and in preparing them for lives of usefulness. The spirit of the home was not less truly religious on account of the influence of the mother, but it was more cheerful. The young people were associated with eminent men and women who were full of enthusiasm for missions. They learned to value education more than pleasure or wealth, and to value religion above all other things. Their intellects were developed along with their spiritual nature, and they became intelligent Christians, with large views of the mission of life, and an admirable preparation for usefulness in the world.

With these advantages of education and Christian nurture, Mrs. Tracy was also very fortunate in her own family life. She was married September 13, 1832, to Ebenezer Carter Tracy, M.A., at that time one of the editors of the BOSTON RECORDER. Mr. Tracy had been trained in a Christian home, and the entire basis of his character was religious. He was an accomplished scholar, a graduate of Dartmouth College. All his life he was a lover of the best books—the classics in various languages. His objects in life were high, and as pure as they were high. He was in full sympathy with the missionary plans of Mr. Evarts, and it was one of the leading objects of his life to commend them to the public through the press. So that they were of one heart in respect to the most important things. About two years after his marriage Mr. Tracy retired from his connection with the

RECORDER and became the editor of the VERMONT CHRONICLE at Windsor, a position which he held until his death almost thirty years afterward.

I think that Mrs. Tracy was fortunate in respect to the place of her home. It was not in the city—to which she was, perhaps, not quite adapted; nor was it in a strictly rural community, which might have been distasteful to her, but in this charming village, where she had abundant room; where she was surrounded by the most beautiful things in nature; where she met families of intelligence and culture, and entered into a simple, hearty, social life. Her home was one of great intelligence—cheerful, vigorous and frugal—a home of industry and of contentment. I remember very well my first introduction to this home, thirty years ago. The children were here then. Only one or two had gone out into the world. Mrs. Tracy was engrossed by the cares of her large household. It was a bright and cheerful home, I remember, highly charged with the intellectual spirit. How quiet and thoughtful the father was; how abundant the bright sayings of the mother; how varied and interesting the talk of the young people. I think of them as they were then, a most interesting family group in that simple home, “of high thinking and plain living;” sheltered for the time from the world’s greater temptations, and yet trained to meet them. There was nothing weak in that type of piety. It was vigorous and practical. As I came to know the church and congregation, I soon learned that Mrs.

Tracy's place was at the front. She had entered into the life of the community very heartily, and she knew all the families and the family histories. Her influence was great with all sorts and conditions of people. No good cause went without her aid. If any new thing was to be done by the young pastor in the somewhat conservative old church, the first thing to be done was to enlist Mrs. Tracy. I do not know that we had a better Bible scholar or a better teacher in the Sunday school than she. I remember how the Ladies' Prayer Meeting flourished after she put her vigorous personality into it. How ready she was to give her time and strength to the Mission Circle! How quickly she responded when anything was to be done toward supplying the wants of such as were destitute of food or of clothing! How glad she was when a revival of religion was beginning! and we knew she would not fail to pray from day to day for its progress. How many times in those days she came across the street to the parsonage with words of encouragement! How vigorous her patriotism when the war broke out! How well she bore the great sorrow which the war brought to her! How that sorrow mellowed her spirit and deepened her piety! How beautiful the religious life which it helped to develop!

Mrs. Tracy loved Windsor as she loved no other place on earth. Here she began housekeeping. Here her children, except the eldest, were born, and here they were consecrated to God at the baptismal font, and here they were trained as Christian chil-

dren. Here her eldest daughter, in the fresh bloom of young womanhood, sickened and died. Here also her husband, in the full richness and maturity of his beautiful life, died and was buried. Here her darling soldier boy was brought for his burial. Here also she expected to be buried when her life work should be finished. I do not wonder that the last time she went from the home of her later years—eight months ago—she came once more to this town. She must have known that it was very likely to be her last visit. She came to the home of almost forty years—to the old church in which she had worshipped, and to which she preserved her loyalty to the last; to the old friends that yet remain—the survivors of a by-gone generation.

She had reason to look back upon her life at Windsor with great satisfaction. Her lines had been cast in pleasant places, and she had a goodly heritage. God gave her neither poverty nor riches, but enough for a comfortable life and for the education of her children. Her position in the community was quite agreeable to her. As she advanced in life she saw more of the friends of earlier years. Every year seemed to add something to her means of happiness. She adapted herself easily to the changes which came with the progress of her life, and accepted gratefully the compensations God gave for the things she had lost. There came a time when the children had all gone out into the world, and she found herself alone, while her mind was yet vigorous

and her strength unbroken. She was very happy in the new home to which she was welcomed, and in which her declining years have been spent. I can hardly think of a more beautiful autumn of life than hers has been.

The promises of God's blessing to His people when they are descending into the vale of years had, in her case, a literal fulfillment. All that could be done by thoughtful and affectionate care has been done, and God never forgets those who do such things.

But these years of the evening of her life have been busy years, filled out to the very end with services which no one else could have rendered so well; services, too, which were very agreeable to her. She will be remembered, perhaps, as long for these things she found it in her heart to do when the shadows were lengthening as for those of earlier years. Yet the cares which she assumed in the years at Plainfield were not so heavy as to become burdens such as she had borne when in the full tide of life. They left her free to go where she would among her children and her other friends. She found satisfaction in developing some of the tastes of her earlier life. Her friends will prize very highly the paintings she sent them—pictures which show how accurate her observation of nature, and show also that her hand had not lost its skill when she was entering her eightieth year. The latest of these sketches, I am told, was enlarged from one she had taken in old Concord sixty years before, and it was completed last November.

How lightly she was touched by the hand of time! How very few of the infirmities of age came to her! How bright and cheerful her conversation has been! How keen her interest in all good things! How vigorous her will to the last! The weekly letters to her children have seldom failed to be written by her own hand, even up to the last weeks of her life. It would have been very hard for her to have felt that she had outlived her usefulness and become a burden to her friends. Her life had been so crowded with activities that she would have pined away if her busy mind and her willing hands had found no more to do. She was spared, in great kindness, most of the pain and weariness of a long illness. When I saw her last, three weeks ago, it was plain that the springs of life were running low, but she said that she felt no pain. She was able to see the dear ones who hastened to her sick-room from far away, and to talk with them cheerfully and naturally of the things nearest her heart. There were days when her strength seemed to be coming back again; and there were days when, from very weakness, she could only rest and wait. It was like a summer's sunset—quiet, serene, beautiful—a sunset that had in it the promise and prophecy of a rising to a life that shall be eternal.

And now, friends, shall we sorrow as those that have no hope? Shall not God's faithfulness to his promises strengthen our faith? Shall we not, in these

days of our mourning, look forward confidently to the life that is beyond this we are now living? As we turn back to the duties that remain for us, shall it not be with a new sense of the goodness and the faithful care of God, and of the nearness of the spiritual world, and the certainty that all God's discipline is designed to fit us for His kingdom of purity and love?

There are some here whose lives can never be quite the same that they have been, because their dear and cherished friend has passed beyond the stars. And yet heaven has never before had quite the same attraction that it has since she entered it. She will not return to us, but, by God's grace, we may hope in due time to go where we may enjoy, with her, the presence of our Lord.

TO HIS NAME BE PRAISE IN THE CHURCH, WORLD
WITHOUT END.—AMEN.



